

National News

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu calls for making skilling initiatives mandatory from school level

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New Delhi: The Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu today called for mandatory inclusion of skilling initiatives at school level saying "schooling and skilling must go together".

Addressing the gathering after inaugurating Residential Skilling Center of Deshpande Foundation in Hubbali today, he said that not enough attention was paid in the past to skilling in the education system and called for revisiting the education policy to make it compulsory for imparting skills to school students.

There was a need to introduce vocational education in the curriculum to create an ecosystem that produces skilled manpower, he observed.

Shri Naidu said that the New Education Policy must address both skilling and scaling and added that it was the duty of the Government of India and all the States to ensure that school children were imparted skills in all spheres.

The Vice President also wanted augmenting of the skills relevant to the needs of rural India and agriculture as part of the initiatives to make agriculture viable and profitable. He also stressed the need for promoting rain water harvesting in a big way.

Observing that agriculture needed a multi-pronged approach from providing infrastructure to ensuring access to market for agricultural commodities, the Vice President asserted that freebies and loan waivers were not going to solve the problems faced by farmers and permanent solutions were needed.

Expressing his confidence that the Indian economy would bounce back if the reforms were continued at the same pace, Shri Naidu appealed to the industry and the corporate sector to join hands with the Universities and academic institutions for strengthening R & D and preparing youngsters to adapt to 21st century requirements.

Calling for creating an ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship to thrive, Shri Naidu also urged the youth to make good use of initiatives like Skill India and acquire knowledge and skills relating to new technologies, including artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Describing India as a very diverse country in terms of geography, language, religion and income, the Vice President stressed the need for inclusive and equitable growth. "It was imperative that all sections of the society are benefited by the skill development programmes", he added.

Shri Naidu said that with 65% of our population below 35 years of age, India was a young nation and has the unique opportunity to serve as a global human resource hub. This vast human resource pool would drive the expansion of the knowledge-based economy, he added.

Stressing the need to create pull factors to attract workers for skill training, the Vice President said that presently the employer does not distinguish whether an employee has picked up skills on the job or has acquired them through formal courses. He urged the government and industry to change this by giving preference to workers with formal skill certification during the recruitment process.

To further incentivise skill training, Shri Naidu suggested to compulsorily include a minimum percentage of certified skilled workers in every manpower intensive project tendered by the government.

The Vice President also wanted the skill development institutions and their faculty to sensitize trainees on the importance of protecting environment. "Our path for development should be environmentally sustainable", he said.

Programmes like Swachh Bharat, Fit India, Skill India and Digital India should become people's movements to transform the nation and accelerate the progress. He urged the people to voluntarily participate in such programmes.

The Vice President appreciated institutions such as the Deshpande Foundation for imparting skills for the rural youth and appealed to private sector and philanthropists to accord priority to skill training.

He also advised the youth to play an active and constructive role in nation-building and adopt a positive attitude. Observing that there was no place for violence in a democracy, the Vice President said that the ballot was more powerful than a bullet.

Shri Pralhad Joshi, Union Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Coal and Mines, Shri Jagadish Shettar, Minister of Large & Medium Scale Industries and Public Enterprises, Govt. of Karnataka, Shri Basavaraj Bommai, Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Govt. of Karnataka, Dr. Gururaj Desh Deshpande, Founder, Deshpande Foundation and Dr. Jaishree Deshpande, Co-founder, Deshpande Foundation were among the dignitaries who graced the occasion.